
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ACKNOWLEDGING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE TARO SECURITY AND
PURITY TASK FORCE AND SUPPORTING THE REFORMATION OF THE
TASK FORCE AS A LEGISLATIVELY ENABLED BODY, SHOULD THE TARO
FARMING COMMUNITY DETERMINE THE NEED TO DO SO.

1 WHEREAS, from the sacred union of Papa and Wākea came
2 Hāloanakalaukapalili, the kalo, the progenitor and elder brother
3 to Hawaiians, and Hāloa, the first man, who together represent
4 the ties binding heaven and earth; and
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6 WHEREAS, kalo was the initial source of substantial
7 nutrition for the early Hawaiians without which the early people
8 of Hawaii could not have thrived and possibly not have survived
9 as a population in Ka Pae 'Āina; and
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11 WHEREAS, the kinship story of Hāloa and
12 Hāloanakalaukapalili binds the descendants of Hāloa in a
13 reciprocal relationship of kuleana of malama 'āina; and
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15 WHEREAS, no other Hawaiian staple crop, including 'uala,
16 mai'a or 'ulu, is considered as sacred as kalo to the people of
17 Hawaii; and
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19 WHEREAS, kalo supported and elevated everyday inter-
20 personal relationships among the early people and their
21 spiritual connections to the islands; and
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23 WHEREAS, kalo is further esteemed as a primary food source
24 that continues to provide substantial nutritional value; and
25

26 WHEREAS, protection of Hawaiian culture, history, and
27 spirituality are reflected in the protection of kalo and the
28 specific agricultural systems in which kalo is grown throughout
29 the islands; and



1
2 WHEREAS, the reciprocal relationship between kalo farms and
3 communities across the Hawaiian islands continues to improve
4 social and familial bonds, intellectual achievements, cultural
5 connections, and emotional and physical health of state
6 residents; and
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8 WHEREAS, by the arrival of the first Europeans in 1778,
9 Hawaiians had developed one of the most advanced systems of wet
10 and dry kalo cultivation in the Pacific, feeding a population of
11 more than three hundred thousand; and
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13 WHEREAS, the number of acres under wetland kalo production
14 islandwide has fallen dramatically from some thirty thousand
15 acres in 1850 to approximately five hundred acres today; and
16

17 WHEREAS, kalo became the state plant in 2008 in honor of
18 the cultural, historic, and agricultural significance of kalo to
19 Hawaii and its people; and
20

21 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force was
22 created by Act 211, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, to guide policy
23 and research kalo and kalo farming as well as to support the
24 vitality, economic viability, and perpetuation of kalo and kalo
25 farming in Hawaii; and
26

27 WHEREAS, the Governor's 2010 comprehensive plan "A New Day
28 in Hawaii" called for an "agricultural renaissance" to improve
29 food security, boost local jobs and revenue, and decrease
30 dependence on importation; and
31

32 WHEREAS, Hawaii imports approximately two million pounds of
33 kalo annually from China, Mexico, and other Pacific islands; and
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35 WHEREAS, Hawaii is subject to frequent and chronic
36 shortages of kalo, lu'au leaf, and poi, particularly following
37 natural disasters, due to insufficient commercial supply and
38 insufficient kalo production; and
39

40 WHEREAS, the importation of kalo presents a high risk of
41 invasive pest introduction and diseases capable of threatening
42 kalo cultivation and reduces opportunities for numerous young



1 kalo growers to drive local kalo production and naturally reduce
2 state dependency on kalo importation; and
3

4 WHEREAS, in 2013, the Department of Agriculture identified
5 the lack of locally grown, staple starch crops as the most
6 pressing concern for Hawaii's food security; and
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8 WHEREAS, kalo, as one of the highest yielding starch crops
9 per acre in Hawaii, is a key factor in addressing this need for
10 local staple starch production, along with other Hawaiian food
11 crops; and
12

13 WHEREAS, even the lowest sea level rise estimates indicate
14 the likelihood of inundation of unsuitable, brackish water in
15 lowland areas that produce the bulk of locally grown kalo,
16 including Hanalei, Kauai; Keanae-Wailuanui, Maui; Hālawā,
17 Molokai; and Waipio, Hawaii Island; and
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19 WHEREAS, the production and consumption of kalo and poi
20 significantly factor into a healthy Hawaiian diet and overall
21 healthy lifestyle of the state population; and
22

23 WHEREAS, community-wide practices involving healthy diets
24 and lifestyles lead to the reduction of diabetes and heart
25 disease within the State, which in turn leads to reduced demands
26 on the state healthcare system; and
27

28 WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of kalo and its
29 significance in Hawaii, the amount of kalo produced and kalo-
30 growing lands available in each ahupua'a continue to limit
31 capacity for change due to existing shortages of available
32 lands; and
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34 WHEREAS, perpetuating and expanding kalo production in
35 Hawaii contribute to resilient communities and an overall policy
36 of "pono economics"; and
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38 WHEREAS, the "pono economics" policy seeks to:
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- 40 (1) Implement economic initiatives reflecting and
41 reinforcing traditional Hawaiian values;
42



1 (2) Repair ecological balance to achieve social balance;
2 and
3

4 (3) Protect the rights and interests of future
5 generations; and
6

7 WHEREAS, the voices of a younger generation that desire to
8 grow kalo are increasing every year, and it is the kuleana of
9 this body to protect the foundation of, and lay the groundwork
10 for, their success; and
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12 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force's 2010 and
13 2014 reports to the Legislature outlined eighty-seven strategic
14 recommendations organized in seven broad categories, noted key
15 policy issues, and identified partner organizations and state
16 agencies capable of implementing the recommended initiatives;
17 and
18

19 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force has helped
20 strengthen relationships among kalo farmers, researchers, and
21 state agencies, especially around issues of water and land,
22 educational outreach, pest control, and the preservation of
23 Hawaiian cultivars; and
24

25 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force has
26 supported, through policy and education, the growth of
27 subsistence and small-scale kalo farmers as an under-represented
28 but valuable segment of the agricultural industry; and
29

30 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force dissolves
31 on June 30, 2015; and
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33 WHEREAS, an online petition recently initiated by the
34 public has collected more than one thousand seven hundred
35 signatures supporting retaining the task force in some form not
36 yet determined to continue to advocate for taro issues at the
37 public agency and legislative level and to facilitate and
38 implement the Taro Security and Purity Task Force's
39 recommendations, further highlighting the urgency and value of
40 perpetuating kalo for the greater community; and
41



1 WHEREAS, the one thousand seven hundred signatories
2 supporting the continuance of a transparent entity to follow the
3 Taro Security and Purity Task Force highlights the urgency of
4 increased protective measures and the value of perpetuating kalo
5 cultivation and consumption for the greater community; and
6

7 WHEREAS, the taro community wishes to establish a body that
8 will embrace a broad constituency of taro growers while
9 continuing to move toward fulfilling the recommendations of the
10 Taro Security and Purity Task Force's 2010 report to the
11 Legislature, especially the need to protect wetland taro lands,
12 and that will enable the body to receive and distribute funds in
13 support of the recommendations; now, therefore,
14

15 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
16 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the
17 House of Representatives concurring, that this body acknowledges
18 the positive impact of the work of the Taro Security and Purity
19 Task Force and the role it has played for the taro growing
20 community and cultural continuity; and
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body supports the
23 reformation of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force as a
24 legislatively enabled body, should the taro farming community
25 determine the need to do so; and
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if reformed, the body is
28 requested to continue to work with the Office of Hawaiian
29 Affairs, Department of Land and Natural Resources, and
30 Department of Agriculture to determine the most appropriate
31 agency relationship; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President
35 of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives,
36 Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian
37 Affairs, Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,
38 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and Taro Security and
39 Purity Task Force.

